



19 September 2005



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Your Ref: 14932WEA/WAS:NAM:scj

Examiner's first report on patent application no. 2004202676  
by Weatherford/Lamb, Inc.

Last proposed amendment no.

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am replying to the request for normal examination. I have examined the application and I believe that there are lawful grounds of objection to the application. These grounds of objection are:

1. The invention defined in the *Independent Claims 1, 11, 16 & 26* is not novel and does not involve an inventive step when compared with the following prior art document that discloses all the essential features of the invention claimed:  
(a) US 4396065 (McKENNEY) 2 August 1983
2. The invention you have defined in the *Independent Claims 3 and 5* is not novel when compared with the document; US 4396065 (McKENNEY) 2 August 1983

The difference between the invention defined in these claims and the disclosure of this citation resides in configuring the pressure wave generator to generate at least one pressure wave having a predetermined frequency (See Claim 3) and the use of a wire-line connected to the back-off tool and a power supply to deliver a signal to the wave generator (See Claim 5). These differences do not materially affect the way the claimed invention works, and thus are not in respect of essential features of that invention. Therefore the cited document discloses all the essential features of the invention.

3. Furthermore, it is considered that the features added by appended claims relate to arrangements that are merely matters of design choice when the general technical knowledge about the state of the art is used and/or the conventional manufacturing techniques typically used to make devices of this type and therefore cannot contribute to providing a patentable inventive step.

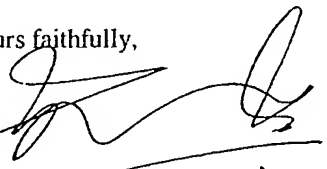
You have 21 months from the date of this report to overcome all my objection(s) otherwise your application will lapse.

You will need to pay a monthly fee for any response you file after 12 months from the date of the first report.

You will also need to pay any annual continuation fees that apply. These will normally be first due five years from the filing date. Please note however that earlier commencement dates apply for divisional applications.

Information about fees may be obtained by phoning 1300 651010.

Yours faithfully,



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